Amendments To The Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of ~~preventing or~~ reducing a bacterial gastrointestinal infection in a human, said bacterial gastrointestinal infection selected from the group consisting of, ~~Clostridium perfringens, Clostridium difficile, Clostridium botulinum, Clostridium tributrycum, Clostridium sporogenes, Escherichia coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa and Staphylococcus aureus,~~ *Clostridium perfringens*, *Clostridium difficile*, *Clostridium botulinum*, *Clostridium tributrycum*, *Clostridium sporogenes*, *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Staphylococcus aureus*, comprising the steps of:

a) orally administering to a human subject a composition comprising viable colony forming units (CFU) of a non-pathogenic lactic acid bacteria, wherein the composition is an oral electrolyte maintenance formulation, wherein said non-pathogenic lactic acid bacteria is *Bacillus coagulans*; and

b) allowing said bacteria to grow in the human subject's gastrointestinal tract.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the human subject is an infant at risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the said bacteria is included in the composition in the form of spores.

5. (Original) The method composition of claim 1, wherein said bacteria is included in the composition in the form of a dried cell mass.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said bacteria is in the form of spores, and said method further comprises allowing the spores to germinate after the applying step.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said composition contains 10^3 to 10^{12} CFU of viable bacteria or spores per gram of composition.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said administering comprises introducing into the digestive tract from 0.1 to 50 grams per day of said composition.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said administering comprises introducing into the digestive tract from 10^2 to 10^{10} viable bacteria or spores per day.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said administering comprises introducing into the digestive tract from 10^3 to 10^6 viable bacteria or spores per day.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said administering comprises introducing into the digestive tract from 10^6 to 10^9 viable bacteria or spores per day.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said composition further comprises an effective amount of a bifidogenic oligosaccharide.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[1]]12, wherein said bifidogenic oligosaccharide is selected from the group consisting of fructo-oligosaccharide (FOS), gluco-oligosaccharide (GOS), raffinose, and long-chain oligosaccharides.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[1]]13, wherein said oligosaccharide comprises a polysaccharide ~~polymers of~~ having a polymer chain length of [[from]] about 4 to 100 sugar units.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises about 10 milligrams to about 1 gram of FOS per gram of composition.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said composition comprises from 100 to 500 milligrams of FOS per gram of composition.

17. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said administering comprises introducing into the digestive tract from 10 milligrams to 20 grams of fructo-oligosaccharide per day.

18. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said administering comprises introducing into the digestive tract from 150 milligrams to 5 grams of fructo-oligosaccharide per day.

19. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said composition further comprises a food substance, flavoring, vitamin or mineral.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said oral electrolyte maintenance formulation is a powder comprising sodium chloride, potassium citrate, citric acid or glucose.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said oral electrolyte maintenance formulation is rehydrated with water to produce a solution comprising 45 to 75 mEq/1 of sodium, 20 mEq/1 of potassium, 35 to 65 mEq/1 of chloride, 30 mEq/1 of citrate, 20-25 g/l of glucose and about 5 x 10^5 to about 5 x 10^7 viable CFU of said bacteria/l.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said composition further comprises an extracellular product of ~~Bacillus coagulans~~*Bacillus coagulans*.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23 wherein the extracellular product is a supernatant or filtrate of a culture of an isolated ~~Bacillus coagulans~~*Bacillus coagulans* strain.

25. (Canceled)

26-50 (Canceled)

51. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said non-pathogenic lactic acid bacteria comprises *Bacillus coagulans* hammer strain Accession No. ATCC 31284.

52. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said oral electrolyte maintenance formulation comprises 45 to 75 mEq/l of sodium, 20 mEq/l of potassium, 35 to 65 mEq/l of chloride, 30 mEq/l of citrate, and 20 to 25 g/l of glucose.

53. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said oral electrolyte maintenance formulation comprises 30%-35% sodium, 9% to 13% potassium, 23%-30% chloride,14%-20% citrate, and 12%-13% glucose.